

BELLEVILLE - AREA INDEPENDENT

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FREE

Sumpter Board OKs resolution on library

By Rosemary K. Otzman
Independent Editor

On Monday, Dec. 3, the Sumpter Township Board of Trustees met in special session to approve a resolution spelling out its support of the use of Elwell School property for the main and permanent site for a district library building.

The resolution will be sent to the Belleville Area District Library Board, Van Buren School District Board, Van Buren Township Board of Trustees and the Mayor and City Council members of the City of Belleville.

The resolution also authorizes and directs the Sumpter Township Supervisor "to provide any and all cooperative services available, including the waiving of any connection fees and charges to the Township Sanitary Sewer System."

Elwell Elementary School was closed beginning with this school year because of dwindling enrollment in the district. The school's septic system has failed and the building could not be opened for use without tapping in to the township's sewer main that goes right past the property.

During discussion on the resolution Monday, township attorney Rob Young said this resolution will ask officials involved in siting the library to take a good look at Elwell.

Trustee Bill Hamm said he went on record three months ago, saying the library belongs in Belleville. He said things have happened since then, but he still stands by his statement.

Supervisor Johnny Vawters pointed out that Mayor Kerreen Conley wrote in the *Independent* that the city wants it in Belleville, but not on Main Street.

"Belleville is the center of the three communities," Hamm continued. He asked

(continued on page 3)



Independent photo by Bob Mytych

Santa came to town Saturday night at the end of the Chamber of Commerce Christmas Parade. He was presented with the Key to the City of Belleville and welcomed by, from left, Van Buren Township Supervisor Linda Combs, Belleville Mayor Kerreen Conley and her two sons, Austin and Carson. At right are Santa's two helpers who rode in on the fire truck with him and behind on the stage is Randy Brown the master of ceremonies of the parade. This is the first time in history that Santa was brought to town in the parade on a Sumpter Township fire truck. Driving the truck was Fire Chief Joe Januszyk.

New VBT Supervisor Combs suspends Public Safety Committee

By Rosemary K. Otzman
Independent Editor

Van Buren Township's new supervisor took office on Nov. 20 and eight days later she suspended the VBT Public Safety Committee and told committee members that their services are not needed.

Supervisor Linda Combs sent out a memo to the committee members dated Nov. 28 that read:

"I have decided to suspend the Public

Safety Committee until further notice to give myself a chance to review the by-laws and the prior recommendations that have been made by the committee. At the present time, your services are not needed, however your service to our community is greatly appreciated and I look forward to working with each of you in the future."

Members of the committee were chairperson Diane Madigan, Richard Wardwell, Ray Bailey, P. Ramone Crowe, and Olivia Bruce.

The committee's next meeting was scheduled for Dec. 5. The group was working on emergency sirens and a new ordinance for minors and alcohol.



Independent photo by Bob Mytych
Belleville High School Homecoming Queen Breana Lewis was on one of the floats in Saturday night's Christmas Parade in Belleville.

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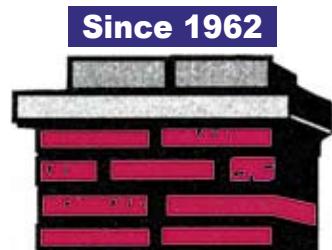
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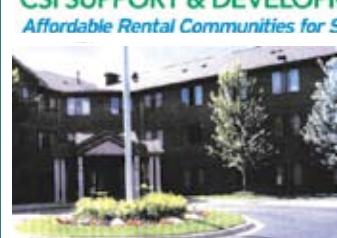
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SECOND FRONT PAGE

Sumpter Board

(continued from page 1)

if anybody has been to Elwell lately to check on its condition.

Trustee Peggy Morgan noted that three or four years ago the media center was updated.

Hamm asked if the school was too big for a library. Supervisor Vawters pointed out there is a gymnasium, with lots of room for children's activities.

Selling medical clinic

In other business at the 29-minute meeting, the board discussed what to do about the old medical clinic on 10.73 acres at 19130 Sumpter Road that the township had purchased from the county for \$25,000 a few years ago.

After discussion, the board voted unanimously to direct attorney Young to go forward and negotiate a sales agreement that would be satisfactory to the board.

The agreement would also have to be satisfactory to the planning commission and zoning board of appeals, if necessary.

Young said Joe Nasser has offered \$125,000 for the building and land for parking to turn into a medical clinic to offer local medical services to the community.

The amount of land necessary is yet to be determined, but some of the land at the rear will be kept with a 66' easement for access for future use.

In the past, Nasser bought the property at the corner of Sumpter and Willis roads from the township and built a deli/pharmacy/gas station.

Nasser had tight guidelines from the township for that project and the board is proposing his next project also have strict restrictions.

Addressing concerns of the board, Young said one of the restrictions could be no medical marijuana service.

"You're not approving the final thing tonight," Young said to the board. "If somebody else came in with a great deal, we're not obligated to Joe."

Supervisor Vawters said a for-sale sign has been up on the property for a long time with no interest from anyone.

The township board had presented the building as a possible site of a library, but library officials sent an expert who said it was not suitable because of issues with the floor and construction.

City Council approves Christmas tree at Doane's Landing

By Rosemary K. Otzman

Independent Editor

The Belleville City Council voted unanimously to allow resident Ruth Bleeker and her group of volunteers to erect a Christmas tree at Doane's Landing at the gateway to the city.

The action was taken at the council's Nov. 19 meeting. This was the second council meeting Bleeker had attended seeking approval for a Christmas tree at Five Points, where it had been years ago. In those days, she said, Five Points was the gateway to the city, with people arriving from five different directions.

Bleeker also had attended a Belleville Downtown Development Authority meeting seeking help with her project.

After another lengthy discussion on the subject of a tree at Five Points, Mayor Kerreen Conley summarized the situation and presented the Doane's Landing option. By the time the mayor was done speaking the council -- and Bleeker -- were ready to approve Bleeker's tree at that location.

First, Mayor Conley thanked Bleeker for her efforts.

"You have an idea to bring the community together," she said to Bleeker, who had called it a tri-community tree for Belleville, Van Buren, and Sumpter.

Bleeker had sought to have the tree erected on a traffic island at Five Points, but Five Points is owned by Wayne County and so a permit is required from the county, complicating the project.

Mayor Conley said she did talk to County Commissioner Kevin McNamara and the Wayne County permit office which requires a permit to indemnify the county.

"There are public safety issues," Conley said referring to Interim Police Chief Hal Berriman's concerns about how a 20' tree would be so wide it could block vision and be a traffic hazard at that location.

Conley said at the Five Points site you couldn't gather people around the tree. She noted in the 1960s when there reportedly was a tree erected there, the traffic was less than it is now.

"We view the gateway to the city as coming over the bridge," Conley said, in introducing the suggestion of a Doane's Landing location. "That's why the gateway sign is there."

Also, that is not far from an electrical box if electric lights are added to the planned solar illumination. Businesses and individuals could approach the tree and hang balls on it, which would be difficult in a high-traffic area, she said.

"And, you can see it from the lake," said John Delaney, one of Bleeker's volunteers



Independent photo by James Otzman

On Friday morning Ruth Bleeker's Christmas tree, approved by the Belleville City Council, was planted at Doane's Landing Park next to the Belleville Bridge. James Akron, who donated the tree, recalled its history. The 20-foot-tall Colorado Blue Spruce started as a small seedling that was given out to children at St. Anthony Catholic Church 20 years ago. It was at Easter time and symbolized renewal. Akron said it was always considered a "blessed" tree. Akron's daughter helped plant it in their back yard on Lohr Road -- and it grew. This season they donated it to the Christmas tree project. After the tree was in place, those involved posed for a picture. From left are James Akron, Alex and Randy Bloss of Blacy Tree Transplanting of Milan, John Delaney (who will be doing the electrical work), Ruth Bleeker, Ken Bleeker, and Alberto Chavez. "When a community comes together, there's no limit what you can do," Ruth Bleeker said.

for the tree project.

The thought of the tree on the lake seemed to push the unanimous vote by the council. Bleeker was asked to work in conjunction with the city administration to get the tree in place properly.

She said she was satisfied. The tree at Five Points was "tradition," she said. The tree at Doane's Landing will be good, she said.

Former Mayor Tom Fielder commented that the late Bob Doane would have been glad for the location since he had spent lots of time and money on a generator he put in Hillside Cemetery to light a Christmas tree that could be seen across the lake. Doane would get up throughout the night to add fuel to the generator -- sometimes in rainy weather.

As part of Bleeker's support, Delaney, who said he was a sign erector, presented a \$2 million insurance policy he bought for the tree at Five Points that would solve the city and county's concerns over liability.

During the discussion on the tree, Mayor Pro-Tem Jack Loria said that Dave Brown has a Christmas tree in front of the Brown Family Center and there's been a Christmas tree in front of the museum for 10 years that is lit right after the parade.

Loria said he didn't remember any big Christmas tree at Five Points in the past and he asked why the county moved the traffic islands around, as reported.

Mayor Conley said the DDA paid to have

perennials planted in the traffic island and this is their third year and they should have optimum growth. Also, the DDA hired Garden Fantasy to do a fall display on the island and will be doing a winter display.

Councilman Tom Smith said he grew up in Quirk Subdivision and never thought of Five Points as the gateway to Belleville because he didn't come as far as Five Points.

He said the city's gateway is at the bridge, which is closer to the central business community.

"I feel a lot of this has been done behind the scenes..." Smith said of Bleeker's efforts to put a tree at Five Points "with the expectations we would automatically approve it." He said the first he knew of it was two weeks earlier when she came to the city council.

Bleeker said she has a list of all the people she's talked to about the tree. She said the first time she came to the city was a year and a half ago and they told her to go to Wayne County.

"A new city body was elected last year and you haven't come to us," Smith said. "... I was blindsided by you..."

Smith said he doesn't really know who supports the tree. He suggested she compromise this year and move forward next year.

But everyone agreed on Doane's Landing by the time Mayor Conley was done with her summary and suggestion.

More library news on page 15

OPINIONS

Editorial

Winter Fest was one to remember

People flocked to Winter Fest in Belleville on Saturday, especially during the nighttime, lighted parade. The crowd of parade-watchers was spread out comfortably along the route from the high school almost to the museum.

But, in front of the Fourth Street Square where ice skating and a lot of other activities were taking place, the crowd was very, very thick.

The street had been closed in that area for a few hours before the parade for entertainments and had to be reopened for the parade.

The large crowd was first asked to get back on the curb. It did. Chairs were moved; kids were moved.

Then, some crowd members were allowed to move in closer to the parade, into the parking spots in front of those who just moved.

That's when tempers flared and some were still upset on Monday when they came to City Hall to complain.

Those in charge will put their heads together for crowd control for next year's parade. Actually, next year's parade will be on Dec. 7 – Pearl Harbor Day – so the theme is probably a given.

With all the people in town Saturday and the mild weather (melting ice sculptures were sad), the restaurants were loaded with diners. There was an hour's wait at the Bayou, which had its best business day ever.

What a grand event for the community! Thank you Chamber of Commerce, BYC, and all the others who made it so.

www.bellevilleareaindependent.com
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EXTRA THINGS I KNOW

...By Rosemary K. Oztman



station (no mechanical repairs) and a convenience store. They said maybe a Subway or something similar will be put in in the future.

The station has been closed for some time and so it will be nice to have activity on that site again.

A story in the *Detroit Free Press* on Sunday reported that presidential candidate Mitt Romney's campaign jet, an MD83, is now parked at Willow Run Airport in Van Buren Township. A second plane, a DC9 used by Romney's running mate U.S. Rep. Paul Ryan of Wisconsin, also is back at Willow Run.

The planes were leased from USA Jet, a cargo company that also leases private planes, which has been at Willow Run for more than 30 years. Romney's plane still has the "Believe in America" slogan on its side. The planes will be repainted in the future for their next use.

The VBT Downtown Development Authority's tree decorations at the north end of the Belleville Bridge are beautiful.

I drive through Belleville at night several times a week and it always takes my breath away to see the lighted trees behind the Van Buren Township sign. I've been told it went up around Thanksgiving.

Thank you, DDA.

On Monday afternoon I was advised

that the Canadian Pacific Christmas Train would be coming through Belleville at about 9 p.m. Monday. At the end of the City Council meeting agenda, I alerted those present of the train due to come through town. It was about 20 minutes to 9 when the meeting ended.

Apparently, those interested let others know and at 9, there were lots of people near the tracks waiting in the dark.

The decorated train came through town at about 9:25 p.m., to the delight of our small town.

That was very nice of Canadian Pacific to send the train along. I was told it was delayed a bit at the border by customs agents, which accounted for the time lapse.

Last Friday a senior citizen wandered away from home in Belleville. The police called out the CERT team to help look for her. That volunteer community response team is great. Police found the lady. She was a little confused, but safe.

At Monday's City Council meeting, Mayor Kerreen Conley said the engineers for the city, Hennessey and Spicer, donated to put lights on the city's float Saturday and there's enough to furnish lights for the new city tree at Doane's Landing, as well.



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Letters

Thank you for coming out to our Winter Fest

To the Editor:

I would like to thank all of you who came out to watch our Shiny Neon Christmas Parade. I hope you and your family enjoyed the parade, the ice skating rink, the fireworks, the ice sculptors, The Soup Crawl, the Chinese Lanterns, the horse and buggy rides and many of our other events during the 2012 Winter Fest weekend.

We strive every year to make the parade and activities better than the previous year. If you have any suggestions for next year's Parade, please let us know at the Chamber office 734-697-7151.

I would like to give a special thank you to Randy Brown and all his helpers. Randy coordinates the Winter Fest every year – great job, Randy. I would also like to thank Janet Millard for her help during our Executive Director's absence, the Chamber Board Members and spouses who helped make everything run smoothly, the BYC for the use of their Ice Rink and, of course, Santa Claus who flew in from the North Pole just to be with us.

As always the Winter Fest wouldn't be possible without our sponsors: Belleville DDA, The BYC, EQ - The Environmental Quality Company, and the Twisted Rooster Restaurant.

We hope all of you enjoyed Winter Fest Weekend and are looking forward to seeing you again next year.

Sincerely

Keith L. Johnston, President
Belleville Area Chamber of Commerce

Disappointed at close of Public Safety Committee

To the Editor:

At Monday's VBT work-study we were told that taping and replaying Public Safety Meetings were a thing of the past.

Two days later I got a letter from Supervisor Combs stating that the Public Safety Committee is suspended until further notice to give Combs "a chance to review the by-laws and prior recommendations that have been made by the committee. And, at the present time, our services are not needed."

After an election, we all expect changes and are hopeful that the changes will bring a more open government. The term "Transparency" has been used freely by many recently elected officials.

It is disappointing that both an anonymous and open venue for residents' safety concerns, animal welfare, and questions regarding Public Safety's \$8 million budgeted tax dollars will now be suspended.

Having had the privilege to serve as a volunteer on the Public Safety Committee for 3 years and currently the elected chair, I believe a face-to-face meeting with the members to discuss any changes the Supervisor would like to make in the bylaws or meeting format would have been a better choice. But, I'm not the Supervisor.

I am hopeful that emergency notification sirens, that the committee has been working on and so many of the residents have been praying for, will soon become a reality.

Diane Madigan
Van Buren Township

Santa's Mailbox

Santa's Mailbox is outside next to the Belleville Area Chamber of Commerce for the children to send their letters to the Jolly Old Elf. The Chamber is located at 248 Main Street, Belleville.

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More Letters

Join us for Community Chorus Winter Concert

To the Editor:

It is again time for the Belleville Community Chorus Winter Concert. We would like to invite you to attend this free concert of local talent. Again, we will be including the Youth and Teen Choruses with the Adults.

As always, we perform at the Belleville United Methodist Church at 417 Charles Street, and will begin at 7 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 15. Please try to attend as this is one of our two main concerts...

Thank you,
Geof Bush, President
Belleville Community Chorus
<http://www.bellevillechorus.org>

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Show a little class by paying for your vacation

To the Editor:

Mr. President, just a note to wish you and the family a "Merry Christmas". I'm sorry, I meant a "Happy Holiday".

I know you will have a wonderful time in Hawaii. Twenty days cost \$4 million. During these difficult times, show a little class. Pay for the trip yourself. After all, you were elected President, not King.

Mickey Widener, Van Buren Township



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Obituaries



Anne Blazek

ANNE BLAZEK (December 23, 1914 - November 7, 2012)

Anne Blazek, age 97, of Belleville, MI, passed away on Wednesday, November 7, 2012, surrounded by her family at Angela Hospice Care Center in Livonia, MI.

Born on December 23, 1914 to the late Otto and Anna M. Bitnar. Beloved wife of the late Carl A. Blazek. Dearest mother of the late Ronald C. Blazek. Cherished Grandma of Mark and Jeff.

Dear Aunt of many loving nieces and nephews. Ms. Blazek was married for 72 years and was a Belleville resident most of her life. Anne was a hard worker who cared so much for her family and friends. She was an avid bowler and enjoyed golfing, dancing, traveling, and preparing Czech-style meals and deserts. Her smile, thoughtfulness, creativity, and love will be greatly missed.

Cremation rites have been accorded. Interment of cremains at Hillside Cemetery, Belleville. A Memorial Service will be held at 2 p.m. Saturday, December 8, 2012 at David C. Brown Temporary Viewing & Funeral Chapel, 500 E. Huron River Dr., Belleville, with Rev. Richard Bolter officiating.

Memorial contributions may be made to the American Stroke Association. Please sign her on-line guestbook and share a story for her family to treasure at www.davidcbrownfh.com

PAULINE ANNA KOTOWSKY

(May 13, 1924 - December 1, 2012)

Age 88 of Belleville. Survived by 3 children Walter Bohdan, Halyna Cowan, and George Kotowsky; 17 grandchildren, 35 great-grandchildren, 3 great-great grandchildren; 7 siblings. David C. Brown Funerals, Belleville.

GRACE VIOLET KUBITSKEY

(October 16, 1918 - December 3, 2012)

Grace Violet Kubitskey, age 94, of Romulus, MI, passed away on Monday, December 3, 2012 at her home.

She was born on October 16, 1918 in Detroit, Michigan, daughter of the late Herman and Helena (Lanstra) Mida. Survived by 1 son, Norman (Joyce) Kubitskey of Belleville and 1 daughter, Sharon (Joe) Coffee of Romulus, MI. Also, 4 grandchildren Margaret, Kelly, Jeffrey and Kay; 6 great-grandchildren Heather, Nicole, Jessica, Nicholas, William and Emily; and 2 great-great-grandchildren Jacob and Emma. Mrs. Kubitskey is preceded in death by her husband, Frank in 1981, 4 sisters and 5 brothers.

A service will be held on Friday, December 7, 2012 at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Westland, MI. Interment at Michigan Memorial Park, Flat Rock, Michigan.

Memorial contributions may be made to Angela Hospice-Livonia and would be appreciated by the family. Arrangements by David C. Brown Funeral Home, Belleville.

Please sign Grace's on-line guestbook and share a memory for her family to treasure at www.davidcbrownfh.com.

M. LORAIN WAUER

(December 29, 1953 - November 23, 2012)

M. Loraine Wauer, age 58, also known as Rainie Hoerig Wauer, passed on Friday, November 23, 2012 from heart complications.

Rainie is survived by son Red or Rodger (Jessica) Howell; her daughter Sonja Sprague; 6 grandchildren Zylia Sprague, Stevie Ray, Ethan, Samantha, Jason and Bobby; sister Teri Hoerig (Ray) Lemanski; nephews and niece Walter Mathew (Heidi) Gohl, Teresa Gohl-Ross (Tom) and Alexander Gohl; grand-nephew and nieces Ryan, Mya, Layla, Makayla and one on the way.

Rainie was preceded in death by her husband Robert W. Wauer, her father Herbert Hoerig, Jr., mother Dorothy J. Hoerig and brother Herbert A. Hoerig.

The celebration of her life will be held at Grace Baptist Church in Belleville at 2 p.m. December 8. In lieu of flowers, please send donations via Paypal to sunnyzes1@gmail.com to help the family cover arrangements. There is also a need for help with food. Please call Nancy at 734-697-1970.

More Letters

Walmart teams up with Salvation Army

To the Editor:

Walmart stores are working closely with The Salvation Army this holiday season to ensure that children not only have a good Christmas, but that there are funds to assist families all through the year with emergency financial assistance.

There are several ways for you to help.

Saturday, Dec. 8, Walmart's Fill the Truck event will be at both the Belleville Road and Canton Center Road stores from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Please donate a new toy (or toys) at the specially marked trucks in the parking lots.

The Belleville location will be manned by volunteers from Open Arms Lutheran Church and Day Care (Belleville). The Canton Center Road store will be manned by Boy Scouts from the Plymouth/Canton schools.

As always, you can make a monetary

gift in our kettles that will also be outside both Walmarts. Volunteers will be standing by to accept your donations. These donations are used all throughout the year to assist Belleville residents (as well as residents of Plymouth, Canton and Northville) with rent and utility assistance as well as school supplies and food.

If you would like to volunteer to man a kettle, please contact Sandy Kollinger at sandra_kollinger@usc.salvationarmy.org or go to www.ringbell.org to find an available time and location nearest you.

And finally, many Walmart stores will host angel trees. You can select an angel, purchase the item and return it to the tree after you are done shopping. Salvation Army personnel will pick up the gifts in time for holiday distribution.

The Salvation Army is indeed grateful to Walmart for their continued support. Their support allows us to meet the needs of those in the Belleville community (which includes Van Buren and Sumpter Townships).

For more information on how The Salvation Army is at work in the Belleville community, along with many other organizations, please feel free to contact Laurie Aren at laurie_aren@usc.salvationarmy.org or by phone at 734.453.5464.

Laurie Aren, Director
Family & Community Ministries
The Salvation Army Plymouth Corps
Website: misalplymouth.org
Visit the Plymouth Corps on Facebook

VIRGINIA MARY NORRIS

(February 4, 1915 - November 29, 2012)

Age 97 of Willis. Preceded in death by her husband Harley T. Norris. Survived by several nieces and nephews. Service was Dec. 1 at David C. Brown Temporary Viewing Chapel. Interment will be Dec. 7 in Dayton, TN.

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More Letters

Help us make Christmas for this needy family

To the Editor:

Christmas time can be a happy wonderful time of year or it can be a cause for stress and hopelessness.

On Sunday, Oct. 21, 2012 Chase Miller at the age of 1 lost his life due to child abuse at the hands of his mother's boyfriend while Chase's mother was working. The boyfriend has been charged with murder.

Chase's mother is currently unable to work as she comes to terms with this unimaginable incident that took her son's life. At the same time she is attempting to stay strong and positive for her two daughters, ages 5 and 10. As the holidays are quickly approaching she has yet another dilemma: how to give her girls a Merry Christmas.

Myself along with a close friend, Brenda Holder are working together to make this Christmas as happy as can be expected for this family. We are collecting gift donations for the girls, food donations, gift cards, as well as monetary donations, to help with household expenses.

The girls are ages 5 and 10. The 5 year old likes playing with dolls, Barbies. She wears a size 6-7, shoe size 1. Her favorite colors are pink, purple and blue. Her 10-year-old sister enjoys reading, writing, drawing and scrapbooking. She would like some items to make her bedroom more "girly". Her favorite colors at the moment are Michigan's blue and yellow. Purple is her least-favorite color. She wears a size 8-10, shoe size 2.

Their mom is looking for a bunk bed for the girls if anyone has one that is no longer in use.

If you are able to help us make this family's Christmas a little brighter we would greatly appreciate it.

Please contact us with any questions or to arrange collection of donated items at: 734-482-8879.

Thank you in advance for your help and support.

Page McLaughlin, Belleville
and Brenda Holder, Ypsilanti

Public asked to share BHS photos for display

To the Editor:

The Belleville Area Historical Society is taking part in a project to display memorabilia from our old BHS in the entrance lobby of our brand-new Belleville High School.

To be included in the display are various commemorative plaques from the various additions that were added to the old school over the years, photos of the school from different time periods, multiple composite photos of graduating classes, and a section honoring BHS graduates who have served in the military.

We are very much in need of photos of BHS graduates in military uniform -- we are hoping to represent all eras.

If you have family photos of service men or women or any photos of the old BHS that you would like to contribute to this project, we would be very happy to have them. While we can't promise to display all photos in the high school, any photo that is donated will be added to our archives at the Belleville museum.

If you wish to donate a photo(s), please contact the Belleville Area Museum at 734-697-1944. If you have a photo that you don't wish to part with, please consider having a copy made for inclusion in this

project.

We are very excited for this opportunity to preserve the history of the old school in our wonderful, new Belleville High School and are hoping that our BHS alumni and our Van Buren Public Schools community will help us make this a reality.

Thank you,

Diane Wilson

Belleville Area Museum & Historical Society

Upcoming Meetings

- Saturday, Dec. 8 – The board meeting of Friends of the Belleville Area District Library is at 10 a.m. at the library. Public welcome.

- Monday, Dec. 10 – Van Buren Township

Board work/study session, 4 p.m. Also, Van Buren Public Schools Board of Education, 7 p.m., BHS mini auditorium

- Tuesday, Dec. 11 – Van Buren Township LDFA, 2 p.m. Also, VBT Recreation Committee, 5:30 p.m. Also, Sumpter Township workshop at 6 p.m., followed by regular meeting at 6:30 p.m. Also, VBT Board of Zoning Appeals, 7 p.m. Also, Belleville Area District Library Board, 7 p.m. Also, special board meeting for Van Buren Township Board of Trustees, 7:30 p.m.

- Wednesday, Dec. 12 – Van Buren Township Planning Commission, 7:30 p.m.

- Thursday, Dec. 13 – Sumpter Township Planning Commission, 6:30 p.m. Also, City of Belleville Planning Commission, 7:30 p.m.

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Pet of the Week

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We'd like everyone to give a big shout out to our **Ms. Bella**. **Bella** is a 1 year and 8 month old German Shepherd mix that came back to us late this summer after making it through a rough patch in her life. Like a strong survivor she is slowly and steadily making her way through some trust and fear issues and her true loving, playful and friendly self is beginning to peek out again. She is rather shy and timid with new people and needs some time to warm up and develop her trust in you but once she does this girl opens up and blossoms into an amazingly lovable, fun-loving and affectionate pup. One thing you absolutely have to know about **Bella** is her addiction to Pup-Peroni treats. If you bring this girl home plan on buying stock in the company to supply her demands for her favorite tasty treat. Her black and tan coat and fit Shepherd looking physique is very attractive making her truly beautiful inside and out. **Bella** might not be the easiest pup to win over but if you give her the time she needs and a lot of Pup-Peroni's you'll see she is well worth the fuss. Come take some time to meet **Bella** and you'll soon see the terrific furry friend we have gotten the honor of getting to know and care for. **Bella** is spayed, vaccinated, and micro-chipped.

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Independent photo by James Oztman

On Thursday, Nov. 29, city workers were hauling away pieces of the former Belleville Skate Park that the city council recently ordered destroyed. The skate park, paid for with funds from the quarter-mill tax for Wayne County Parks and Recreation, was located at the site behind the DPW yard in Belleville's Village Park for the past ten years. The ongoing problems with vandalism at the remote location led to the park's demise.

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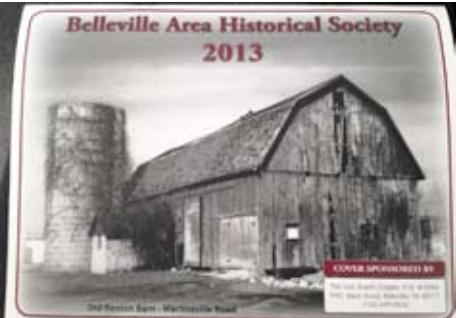
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SANTA's Workshop







2013 Belleville Historical Calendar features Keith Bruder's barn photos

The 2013 Belleville Area Historical Society calendars have been delivered in time for Christmas giving.

The 2013 calendar features local historic barn photographs from the collection of Keith Bruder.

"Barns of the Belleville Area" are on sale for \$7, or \$6 for members of the Belleville Area Historical Society.

They may be purchased at the museum during its regular hours: 3-7 p.m. Tuesdays and 4 p.m. to noon Wednesdays through

Saturdays (closed holiday weekends).

Calendars also are available at the Van Buren Township Hall, Belleville City hall, Belleville Area District Library, Antiques on Main, Garden Fantasy, the Belleville Area Chamber of Commerce, and Sumpter Ace Hardware.

Calendars may also be purchased by mail by calling the museum at 734-697-1944.

Moore, Collins, Mitchell named to WMU Dean's List

Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo has announced its Dean's Lists for the Spring and Summer I semesters.

Malissa Moore of Belleville has been named to the Dean's List for the Summer I semester. She is a French student in the College of Arts and Sciences.

Chelsea Collins and Eric Mitchell, both of Belleville, are named to the Spring semester Dean's List. Collins is studying Nursing in the College of Health and Human Services. Mitchell is studying pre-business administration in the Haworth College of Business.

Paid Advertisement

Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD

Psalm 33:12a

If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

2 Chronicles 7:14

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**Light Up the Town for
Christmas in Belleville 2012**

Got the spirit? You don't need to sign up - just decorate the outside of your house with lights and seasonal decorations.

Then have your lights on from 6 PM to 10 PM on Wednesday and Thursday, December 12th and 13th. The contest judges will observe all areas of the City. A prize will be awarded for the best display in each of four areas:

- Victoria Commons
- Harbour Pointe
- The two mobile home parks
- The balance of the City
- Businesses

The winner in each area will be notified on Friday, Dec. 14th, and presentations will be made at the City Council meeting on Monday, Dec. 17th.

Published as a public service announcement by the Belleville-Area Independent Newspaper.

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MONDAY, DECEMBER 31ST
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Things to do in the Belleville area...

• Thursday, Dec. 6, and Friday, Dec. 7

Lincoln Golden Ages Senior Center is holding its annual rummage sale fundraiser, from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day. Poinsettia plants, baked goods. Order plants early at (734) 483-8366. Sale is at 8970 Whittaker Rd., entrance on west side of Brick Elementary School.

• Thursday, Dec. 6 – The annual candlelight ceremony at the Angel of Hope statue in Hillside Cemetery begins at 7 p.m. Information: 697-5090.

• Thursday, Dec. 6 – The Evening Book Group meets at the library at 7 p.m. This month's book is "Best Friends, Occasional Enemies" by Lisa Scottoline.

• Thursday, Dec. 6, Friday, Dec. 7 and Saturday, Dec. 8 – Belleville High School play "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" at 7:30 p.m. at BHS Auditorium. Tickets are \$8 and \$7.

• Friday, Dec. 7 – Spaghetti dinner fund raiser at 4 p.m. at the Belleville Moose Lodge, 831 E. Huron River Dr., to benefit Missie Fey, 29, who was diagnosed with breast cancer. \$10 at the door.

• Friday, Dec. 7 – Friends Family Theater Free Friday Movie at 7 p.m. (Bounce House at 6:45 p.m.) Fun, Food, Fine Films, FREE In Youth Center, 7890 Tuttle Hill Road at Bemis Road, Ypsilanti. Movie Questions (734) 482-5074

• Saturday, Dec. 8 – Open family swim for the community at new pool at BHS, 1-3 p.m., cost \$5 per swimmer.

• Saturday, Dec. 8 – Children's Christmas Ornament Workshop at the museum, 10 a.m., 11 a.m., 1 p.m. Two dollars per child includes tour of museum. Santa is at the

museum, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

• Wednesday, Dec. 12 – The Belleville Area Chamber of Commerce invites you to attend its annual Christmas party from 6 to 9 p.m. at the Belleville Charhouse, 524 Main St. Bring an unwrapped new toy or non-perishable item. Register by Friday, Dec. 7, to 734-697-7151 or support@bellevilleareachamber.org

• Thursday, Dec. 13 – Home Grown Lecture Series at the library at 7 p.m., free. Andre' Renier will speak on "Jousting: A Night with a Knight".

• Saturday, Dec. 15 – Children's Christmas Ornament Workshops at the museum, noon, 1 p.m., 2 p.m. Two dollars per child includes tour of museum. Santa at the museum from noon to 4 p.m.

• Saturday, Dec. 15 – First BHS Alumni Swim Meet at the new BHS pool, starting at 1 p.m.

• Sunday, Dec. 16 – Brunch With Santa, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Van Buren Township Hall. \$6 per person; children under 3 free. Purchase tickets in advance. King Brothers' pancakes

with sausage, milk, orange juice, and coffee.

• Sunday, Dec. 16 – Pug-N-Play is on tap again at 2 p.m. at the Wayne County Fairgrounds on Quirk Road, north of the I-94 freeway. Bring your pugs to play with other pugs and socialize with their owners. Chip in to help pay for the room rental.

• Monday, Dec. 17 – Take your concerns on state government to State Rep. Diane Slavens at a coffee hour from 8 to 9 a.m. at the Belleville Charhouse, 524 Main Street. Later today, from 5 to 6 p.m. she will be at the Daydream Café at 47192 Michigan Ave., Canton.

Visit Santa

at the Belleville Area Museum!
Dec. 8 10am to 3pm
Dec. 15 Noon to 4pm

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• Sunday, Dec. 16 – Pug-N-Play is on tap again at 2 p.m. at the Wayne County Fairgrounds on Quirk Road, north of the I-94 freeway. Bring your pugs to play with other pugs and socialize with their owners. Chip in to help pay for the room rental.

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Kesler pays Hirsch \$12,427.44 to settle suit on game show winnings

By Rosemary K. Oztman
Independent Editor

On Nov. 27, Kevin Hirsch received a cashier's check for \$12,427.44 from Rebecca Kesler of Van Buren Township for the amount, plus interest, that he was supposed to get according to court order.

This apparently ends the three years of legal fighting over Hirsch's share of Kesler's \$50,000 winning in the Who Wants to be a Millionaire game show.

Kesler's appeal hearing on the case was due to be heard the next day, Nov. 28, before Circuit Court Judge Curtis.

"I don't know what inspired this, but she wrote a check for the entire amount of the judgment," Hirsch said.

Hirsch said he always thought the judgment, ordered by 34th District Court Judge David Parrott, wasn't enough, but he does not plan to appeal. The judge ordered \$11,782, plus pre- and post-judgment interest.

"On principle, this was the absolutely right thing to do," Hirsch said, adding that it was a shame it took three years in court to get it.

Hirsch had asked Judge Parrott to appoint a Receiver to go to the home Kesler shares with her husband Tim Szetela and their two sets of twins in Country Walk in Van Buren Township to seize possessions to satisfy the judgment, which Kesler didn't pay.



Kesler

She said she never promised Hirsch half of her winnings if he helped her get on the game show. He disagreed and filed suit.

Judge Parrott did not approve appointment of the Receiver and directed Hirsch to investigate more himself. Hirsch said he and his attorney David Williams did a creditor's exam and found that in 2009 Kesler put her \$50,000 in winnings into the joint bank account for her and her husband.

The money reportedly paid for lasik eye surgery for her and her husband and new hardwood floors for their home.

Szetela then transferred the rest into his account that held over \$100,000 when Hirsch checked, he said.

Kesler had said she couldn't pay Hirsch because she had no assets and that her husband had all the assets in the family.

Hirsch said he considered a fraudulent transfer claim against Szetela or to refile the motion to appoint a Receiver.

Hirsch said Judge Parrott told him to file what he thinks is appropriate and he will make a ruling.

Hirsch said Kesler had hired an attorney and her attorney contacted his attorney to find out if he would settle for less than the court-ordered figure and Hirsch said he wouldn't.

There was some wrangling about having Hirsch and his wife release claims against Kesler and Szetela, but Hirsch refused to drag his wife into the case.

Then, the check arrived.

Hirsch said Kesler's case before the attorney grievance commission is still pending.

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- Best School Float – Savage Elementary
- Best Community Float – BYC
- Best Business Float – I-94 Marine and Water Sports

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Birthday

- Dec. 1 – Rochelle McArthur
- Dec. 11 – Lori DeMond
- Dec. 13 – Dan Michael
- Dec. 16 – Christene McArthur
- Dec. 17 – Alex Briggs
- Dec. 29 – Vicky White

Do you have a birthday in December? Does anyone you know have a birthday soon? Call the *Independent* at 699-9020 and let us know. We'll list it in this column ASAP following your call. There is no charge.

Charter Township of Van Buren Public Notice

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF VAN BUREN SPECIAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES NOVEMBER 27, 2012

Supervisor Combs called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Board Room. Present: Supervisor Combs, Clerk Wright, Trustee Hart, Trustee McClanahan and Trustee Miller. Absent: Trustee Jahr (excused). Others in attendance: Public Safety Director McClanahan, DPW Director MacDonald, Attorney McCauley, Executive Assistant\Assessing Coordinator Stevenson, Secretary Cline and an audience of eighteen (18).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Budd moved, Hart seconded to approve the agenda as presented. Carried.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA:

Wright moved, Hart seconded to approve the Consent Agenda [Work Study Session Minutes October 15, 2012; Regular Board Meeting Minutes October 16, 2012; Budget Preparation Meeting Minutes October 24 & 25, 2012; Adoption of the 2013 Holiday Calendar; Adoption of the Board of Trustees 2013 Work Study Session and Regular Meeting Calendar; Adoption of Resolution 2012-19(a) and authorize the Township Supervisor or the Director of Public Works to sign Wayne County Annual Maintenance Permit Number A-13045; Adoption of Resolution 2012-20 and authorize the Township Supervisor or the Director of Public Works to sign Wayne County Annual Pavement Restoration Permit Number A-13100; Adoption of Resolution 2012-21 and authorize the Township Supervisor or the Director of Public Works to sign Wayne County Annual Special Events Permit Number A-13086; Closed Session Minutes October 15, 2012] as presented. Carried.

PUBLIC HEARING:

CORRESPONDENCE: Trustee Hart welcomed all newly elected Board members and looks forward to working with the entire Board. Supervisor Combs echoed Trustee Hart's comments.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS: Wright moved, Miller seconded to approve the reappointments of Angela Nettro, Juanita Jensen, Harry Roesch and Loretta Speaks (alternate) to the Board of Review with terms to expire December 31, 2014. Carried.

Budd moved, McClanahan seconded to approve the Professional Services Agreement with United Water to provide and install an atmosphere monitoring system at the EQ Basin and to authorize the Township Supervisor and Township Clerk to execute the agreement. Carried.

Wright moved, Hart seconded to approve the adoption of Resolution 2012-22 (Seventh Revision), authorizing the continued full participation by Van Buren Township in the Downriver Sewer System Joint Management Committee (JMC) until December 31, 2013; designate the Director of Public Works as representative of the JMC and the Township Supervisor as alternate representative of the JMC; authorize Township Supervisor and Township Clerk to sign the Resolution. Carried.

VOUCHER LIST: Budd moved, Hart seconded to approve the November 27, 2012 voucher list as presented. Carried.

REPORTS: Supervisor Combs ordered the August 2012 Budgetary Report received and filed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Supervisor Combs announced the cancellation of December 4th and 18th Board of Trustees meetings and December 3rd and 17th Work Study meetings and further announced notice of Special Board of Trustees meeting to be held on Tuesday, December 11th at 7:30 p.m. and Special Work Study meeting to be held on Monday, December 10th at 4:00 p.m. Supervisor Combs also announced the Van Buren Parks and Recreation will host a Holiday Arts and Crafts Show on Saturday, December 1st from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the Township Community Center. A Brunch with Santa will be held on Sunday, December 16th from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the Township Recreation Department. The September Days Senior Center Christmas Party will be held on Friday, December 7th from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Clerk Wright announced on Friday, December 7th A Pearl Harbor Remembrance event will be held from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Wayne County Community College Western Campus located at 9555 Haggerty Road. This event is open to the public at no cost and information is posted on Township website www.vanburen-mi.org and Cable Channel VBT 12.

Treasurer Budd thanked the Van Buren Civic Fund for recently donating money to the Senior Department to purchase appliances and the Parks and Recreation Department to purchase gymnastic related items (floor mats).

AUDIENCE (Non-Agenda Items): Comments were made from 7:57 p.m. to 7:59 p.m. by the Board and audience regarding the following topics: Budget public hearing notice and Special Board of Trustees meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: Hart moved, Wright seconded to adjourn at 8:00 p.m. Carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Leon Wright, Township Clerk
Linda H. Combs, Township Supervisor
Publish: December 6, 2012

Charter Township of Van Buren Public Notice

DECEMBER BOARD OF REVIEW CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF VAN BUREN

NOTICE TO THE TAXPAYERS AND PROPERTY OWNERS OF VAN BUREN CHARTER TOWNSHIP

The BOARD OF REVIEW of the Charter Township of Van Buren will meet at the Township Hall, 46425 Tyler Road on Tuesday, December 11, 2012 at 3:00 p.m..

The purpose of this meeting will be:

- 1) to correct of clerical errors or mutual mistakes of fact;
- 2) Homestead exemption status; and
- 3) Poverty exemptions.

Any property owner who believes they qualify should call Van Buren Township Assessing Department at 734.699.8946 prior to December 7, 2012

Leon Wright, Van Buren Charter Township

Publish: November 29, 2012; December 6, 2012

Post: November 26, 2012

Sumpter Township Public Notice

Sumpter Township Regular Board Meeting Minutes November 13, 2012

Meeting called to order at 6:30 pm by Supervisor Vawters showing present: Supervisor Vawters, Clerk Hoffman, Treasurer J. Morgan, Trustees: Bates, P. Morgan. Excused absence Trustees: Kennedy & Hamm. Also present: Attorney Young, Deputy Clerk Hurst and approximately 12 residents.

3. Agenda: Motion by P. Morgan, supported by Hoffman to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Public comments only on agenda items

5. Minutes:

A. Motion by P. Morgan, supported by J. Morgan to approve the regular board meeting minutes October 23, 2012. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Motion by Hoffman, supported by P. Morgan to approve the public hearing meeting minutes October 23, 2012. Motion carried unanimously.

C. Motion by Bates, supported by J. Morgan to accept minutes of firefighters September 9, 2012. Motion carried unanimously.

D. Motion by P. Morgan supported by Hoffman to accept minutes of Planning meeting October 11, 2012. Motion carried unanimously.

6. Warrants: Motion by P. Morgan, supported by Bates to approve the warrants totaling \$153,590.80. Roll call: Yes: Vawters, Hoffman, J. Morgan, Bates, & P. Morgan. Nays: None. Absent: Kennedy & Hamm. Motion carried unanimously.

7. Water & Sewer: Motion by J. Morgan, supported by Hoffman to approve the water & sewer report as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

8. Police: Motion by P. Morgan, supported by J. Morgan to approve the police report as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

9. Building/Ordinance: Motion by P. Morgan, supported by J. Morgan to approve the building/ordinance report as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

10. Fire: Motion by Hoffman, supported by Bates to approve the fire report as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

11. Treasurer: Motion by P. Morgan, supported by Hoffman to approve the treasurer's report as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

12. Supervisor: Motion by P. Morgan, supported by Hoffman to approve the supervisor's report as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

13. Attorney:

No report.
14. Board response: Motion by P. Morgan, supported by J. Morgan to purchase 6 small Welcome to Sumpter Township signs total \$1,950.00. 1 nay. Motion carried.

15. New Business

A. Motion by P. Morgan, supported by Bates to approve an agreement with Wayne County for 2012 C.D.B.G. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Motion by P. Morgan, supported by J. Morgan to allow the Supervisor's office to use the PNA hall on December 17th for a holiday dinner from 2 to 6 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

C. Motion by Bates, supported by J. Morgan to approve the resignation/retirement of Ray Christiansen as mechanical/Plumbing inspector as of 12-31-12 with regrets. Motion carried unanimously.

D. Motion by P. Morgan, supported by J. Morgan to approve the revised Parks & Recreation commission By-Laws/Constitution dated 11-13-12. Motion carried unanimously.

E. Motion by Bates, supported by J. Morgan to approve to advertise for a mechanical/plumbing inspector. 1 Nay. Motion carried.

F. Motion by P. Morgan, supported by Hoffman to approve the township officials and deputies to attend the MTA Conference January 22 to the 25th, 2013 in Detroit. Motion carried unanimously.

16. Announcements

17. Open Floor

18. Adjournment: Motion by Hoffman, supported by P. Morgan to adjourn at 7:17 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Clarence J. Hoffman Jr., Clerk

CERTIFICATION

I, Clarence J. Hoffman Jr., Clerk of Sumpter Township, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of minutes taken at a Regular Board Meeting of the Sumpter Township Board of Trustees on November 13, 2012 at 6:30 pm at the Sumpter Township Hall, 23480 Sumpter Road, Belleville, MI 48111, County of Wayne, and that said meeting was conducted and public notice of said meeting was given pursuant to and in full compliance with the Open Meeting Act, being Act 267, Public Acts of Michigan, 1976, and that the minutes of said meeting were kept and will be available as required by said act.

Clarence J. Hoffman Jr., Clerk

Publish: December 6, 2012

Sumpter Twp. to send resolutions to school board, library board

By Rosemary K. Oztman
Independent Editor

Before any decisions are made on what to do with Elwell Elementary School and where to site a new district library, the Sumpter Township Board members want their ideas on the subjects sent to the right people.

At its Nov. 27 meeting, the board voted unanimously to send resolutions to the Van Buren Public Schools Board of Education and the Belleville Area District Library

Board before their next meetings.

On Dec. 3, the township board met in special session to approve the resolutions, which will also be sent to the City of Belleville mayor and city council and the Van Buren Township Board of Trustees.

The discussion on Elwell and the new library started at the end of the Nov. 27 Sumpter meeting when resident Mary Ban asked the board to continue to speak up for Elwell School and also to continue to put pressure on the district library board.

Ban said there are two township residents who "are supposed to be representing us" on the library board. "I hope they get their common sense back," Ban said.

"Elwell school is more beautiful than anything they could put out on a pod

on the water," she said, referring to the library board's plan to use the DNR site on Belleville Lake.

They need to seriously investigate Elwell, Ban said.

She said Elwell could house the main library and the present library could be kept in Belleville as a satellite.

"They don't want it on Main Street," she said referring to reports published in the Nov. 22 *Independent*. "Leave it where it is."

Ban said prices to build are astronomical. She said she has asked Deputy Supervisor Craig Moody to get her the square footage of Elwell school so it can be used in consideration of the building.

"We need residents to speak to the school board," said Trustee Peggy Morgan. "You are, for sure, the best one to speak," she said to Ban, adding the school board members do listen when people talk.

Ban said people are really questioning some of the issues, including the size of the proposed library building and the traffic nightmare it would create on Belleville Road.

"Traffic will back up all the way to Walmart," she said.

Ban recalled that about seven years ago, Library Director Deb Green and her architect came to a Sumpter Township board meeting to talk about the DNR lakeside site for a library building. The architect, Dan Whisler, showed a drawing he made of a library on the site.

Ban remembers she told Green then that

the traffic at that site was dangerous and that wouldn't be a good place for a library. Ban said that was way before the district library was formed.

"I fought for the library millage," Ban said, adding, "They should not be dictators."

"Should we have our attorney draw up a resolution to the district library and school board?" asked Supervisor Johnny Vawters.

Ban agreed with a resolution, saying she felt it had to be sent before the start of the new year.

Attorney Rob Young said a resolution is the best way to communicate the board's ideas.

"We appreciate you, Mary," Supervisor Vawters said to Ban.

Trustee Alan Bates said when he was representing Sumpter on the library committee in 2007, the DNR came out and walked the property with the committee members.

"That was way before the district library was formed," Bates said. "It's been in consideration for a long time."

In other business at the Nov. 27 meeting, the Sumpter board:

- Removed from the agenda a request for an Industrial Facilities Tax Exemption for A2Mac1, 8393 Rawsonville Road, after owners of the property did not file paperwork for the tax reduction. The public hearing on the project was closed down because the business did not return calls from the township and did not apply. A2Mac1 can re-file and start the process over if they wish the tax cut, said township attorney Young. The township did establish a district for "research and technology" for the business, and the district remains in place;

• Heard attorney Young ask if the board was interested in selling the medical center property, with nine acres and a building, it bought from the county for \$25,000. He said there have been three groups of people interested in buying it, including Joe Nasser who put up the successful gas station/pharmacy/deli at the corner of Willis and Sumpter roads. Nasser wants to make it into a medical building with medical services. Supervisor Vawters said the vacant building is a burden on the citizens of Sumpter Township to keep up. "It's become an albatross around our neck," Vawters said. Young was directed to negotiate on behalf of the township and come back to the board with an offer;

• Heard attorney Young report on the meetings with the new fire department union. Young said there has been a lot of positive input about improving services to the community.

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FIFTH ANNUAL COMMUNITY OLD FASHIONED CHRISTMAS SERVICE

The Belleville Presbyterian Church will be holding the Fifth Annual Community Old Fashioned Christmas Service in the historic Martha-Mary Chapel on Sunday, December 16th at 6:00 in the evening. You are cordially invited to join us for a service of Lessons and Carols, and for a time of fellowship afterwards.

Special music will be offered by Seek to Be Ministries, a singing group that has graced worship at Belleville Presbyterian Church several times, along with other gifted musicians.

Take a step back in time and come enjoy a simple, moving worship service in an historic setting as you finalize your holiday preparations. A freewill offering will be taken to support those in our community who are experiencing need during the holidays.

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Upcoming Clinics:

WILLIS FEED MILL, 10200 Railroad St., **WILLIS**, Mon., Dec. 10th, 5-6 p.m.

PET SPA 2, 970 Sumpter Rd., **BELLEVILLE**, Sun., Dec. 16th, 4-6 p.m.

PET RESORT, 50425 Bemis Rd., **BELLEVILLE**, Sun., Dec. 23rd, 3-6 p.m.

PET SPA, 5260 Willis Rd., **YPSILANTI**, Sun., Dec. 30th, 4:30-6 p.m.

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Minding Your Business

with Bob Mytych



Visits with Santa will be held the next two Saturdays, Dec. 8, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., and Dec. 15, from noon until 4 p.m. at the Belleville Area Museum. Professional framed photos will be available, too. Santa is sponsored by the **Belleville Central Business Community**.

Janet Millard, past executive director of the **Belleville Area Chamber of Commerce**, is back at the helm of the chamber office. Millard, who's been working part time for the Belleville CBC, is in charge of both offices and replaces former director Rachel Hearn, who left the position last week. Millard will fill in until a new director is found. Welcome back, Janet.

Doug Dalton Auctioneer is gearing up for another estate antique auction this evening, Dec. 6, beginning at 6 p.m. at the **Romulus Progressive Hall** in Romulus. See their ad in today's paper for a partial list of auction items and visit his website at www.dougdaltonauctionerr.com for more details and photos.

The *Independent* office here at **152 Main Street** is a drop-off location for **Toys for Tots** this holiday season. Unwrapped toys can be dropped off here during regular business hours, Monday -Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Call **(734) 699-9020**.

Belleville Presbyterian Church on Belleville Road will be holding its **5th Annual Community Old-Fashioned Christmas Service** at 5 p.m. Dec. 16. Everyone is invited. A freewill offering will be collected. Call **(734) 697-8687**.

The children's church at the **Belleville Church of God** on Hull Road will present a live musical entitled *The Christmas Cupcake: the Sweetest Story Ever Told* on Sunday, Dec. 16 at 11 a.m. Admission is free. Arrive early for the best seats.

Willow United Methodist Church in New Boston is holding a *Blue Christmas Service* on Dec. 9 at 4 p.m. Refreshments will follow. Call **(734) 654-9020**.

Janowiak Funeral Home is now open at 19865 Sumpter Road, just south of Bemis in Sumpter. Owners **Chris and Sandy Janowiak** have received their certificate of occupancy following the approval of all of their permits from the township as well as from the State of Michigan. Watch for a grand opening/open house in the coming weeks. The Janowiaks own and operate a funeral home in Ypsilanti and are excited to branch out to our community. Welcome! Call **(734) 699-6000**.

Last Saturday's Winterfest featured the largest gathering of parade-goers I've ever seen in our downtown and I've seen

plenty of them, including our Strawberry Festival and Harvest Fest parades. I've been covering them here in town for years and I never saw as many rows of people as I saw on Saturday.

It was incredible as the day started with a good turnout at the fun-run/walk and finished with the launch of Chinese Lanterns.

Our small town isn't as small as it used to be, folks. Maybe it's because we haven't given our community many reasons to come out and celebrate in the streets.

Our Main Street looked gorgeous ... something out of a AAA magazine, I say. From the super-sized Christmas Trees going up at one end of town to our lighted gazebo at Victory Park at the other, the spirit of Christmas is everywhere.

Our directory of area churches and their services is still growing and now your church can be added to our list at the great rate of \$75 for 13 consecutive weeks in a one column by one inch tall display box.

Do you have a business item you would like to see in this column? Call Bob Mytych with your suggestion at 734-699-9020. There is no charge to be in this column.

USAF Thunderbirds returns to Willow Run Airport next summer

By Bob Mytych
Independent Sports Editor

The United States Air Force Thunderbirds flight demonstration team will be performing at next year's Thunder Over Michigan Air Show, June 15-16 at Willow Run Airport.

The Thunder Over Michigan web page through the Yankee Air Museum's website will make the announcement on Dec. 11, when the Thunderbirds officially release their 2013 schedule. The June date is the same weekend as the Belleville Strawberry Festival.

The Yankee Air Museum's Facebook page states that details will be announced regarding air show tickets up to 40% off just in time for gift giving this holiday season. Watch for the details at www.yankeeairmuseum.org.

It will be the first appearance here by the jet team in more than 10 years.

Library project makes holiday decorations out of torn-up books Dec. 8

The Belleville Area District Library will hold a "Repurposed Books Holiday Workshop" at 2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 8.

This class is appropriate for beginners and advanced crafters, according to Hilary Savage, Adult Services Librarian.

Books will be provided. Space is limited, so those interested are urged to register early.

For more information, call the library at 734-699-3291.

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This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain of discrimination call HUD toll-free at 1-800-669-9777. The toll-free telephone number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.



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INDEPENDENT CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR SALE

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STUNNING CUSTOM MARBLE Dining Table, 7' long by 48". 8 upholstered Parsons chairs & China Cabinet. Beautiful Must See. \$950 obo (734) 776-2296 12/06

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WANTED

WANTED - ANY SIZE MEN'S JEANS for the homeless. Please drop off at Bladez's 601 E. Huron River Drive. (734) 697-5600 12/13

WANTED

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LOCAL HANDYMAN - SOME Jobs too LARGE - NO JOB too SMALL. Residential Snow Plowing. LICENSED & REFERENCES. (734) 765-9224 12/20

Bethany Bible Church to hold youth basketball league in January

Bethany Bible Church in Belleville will hold Belleville Basketball @ Bethany, a kids' basketball league, from Jan. 12 to March 16 at their church location on East Huron River Drive.

The league is geared for boys and girls ages 5-11 and costs \$30 for early registration prior to Jan. 9, and \$40 after. For registration forms and other details, visit www.bethanybiblechurch.com.

"The liberties of a people never were, nor ever will be, secure, when the transactions of their rulers may be concealed from them."

— Patrick Henry

"I fear the day that technology will surpass our human interaction. The world will have a generation of idiots."

— Albert Einstein

Court Watching:**Teacher pleads guilty to one felony concerning teen, gets probation**

By Diane Madigan

Independent Court Reporter

Andrea Brennan, 38, a former teacher at North Middle School in Van Buren Township, took a plea deal last Friday, pleading guilty to one of the three charges against her.

Teaching at a middle school is no longer an option since she cannot be around children 16 years of age and younger.

Nov. 30 was her final pretrial conference Andrea Brennan scheduled before a two-day jury trial set for Jan. 14.

She and her attorney Loren Dickstein stood before Circuit Court Judge Edward Ewell, Jr. at the Frank Murphy Hall of Justice in Detroit as the Wayne County Assistant Prosecutor spelled out the deal.

Brennan, formerly of Van Buren Township gave a Ypsilanti address to the judge as her place of residence.

According to Van Buren Township Police, Brennan was arrested on July 10, 2012 at 1:30 a.m. in a vehicle in the parking lot of the Beck Baseball field with a 15-year-old male. Both were consuming alcohol, police said.

Police later found a topless photo of Brennan on the teen's cellphone. Brennan was a former teacher at North Middle School with a master's degree. The teen was not one of her students.

Original charges of, distributing obscene matter to a child (a felony) and furnishing alcohol to a minor (a misdemeanor) were dismissed in a plea agreement in which Brennan pled guilty to committing a crime using a computer, a felony with a maximum prison sentence of four years.

In her guilty plea, she affirmed to the judge that she created and transmitted to the teen a picture of a significant portion of her breast.

Neither the victim nor his family were in court on Friday.

Brennan will be formally sentenced by Judge Ewell on Jan. 8.

The sentence agreement includes: Five years of probation, registration as a sex offender, and sex offender counseling. Except for her own children, Brennan is to have no contact with children under the age of 16. She must also allow her computer to be searched at any time during her probation.



Andrea Brennan

Court watching:**Johnson attorney asks federal judge for more time to find witnesses**

By Diane Madigan

Independent Court Reporter

The court-appointed attorney for Thomas Michael Johnson (a/k/a Jody) on Nov. 16 asked a federal court judge to give them 60 more days to locate necessary witnesses for the trial that is scheduled to begin Dec. 11.

Johnson was arrested and prosecuted by Van Buren Township Police for his part in the break-ins in the Denton/Michigan Avenue neighborhoods last winter. Now he has federal charges, as well.

Attorney Mark Magidson said after diligent attempts to find, interview and subpoena witnesses for Johnson's defense, neither Magidson nor the court-appointed investigator Michael Martin have been able to locate them.

Court records show the witnesses are transient with unknown addresses and no known telephone numbers. An additional witness, whose attorney is unknown, is currently incarcerated.

Johnson was arrested April 4 by Van Buren Township Police after he was seen carrying a stolen flat-screen TV from his then-residence in the 6500 block of Parkside in Town and Country mobile home park.

Police executed a search warrant at his residence and a large cache of jewelry and electronics were seized, along with prescription narcotic bottles from a prior break-in in Denton Subdivision.

Police had been investigating the rash of home invasions in the Denton Subdivision area from November through April.

Johnson was charged with three counts of possession of stolen property, and pled guilty to one.

On June 7 Johnson was sentenced to 1 year probation for possession of stolen property by 34th District Court Chief Judge Tina Brooks Green. Johnson had five convictions between 1979 and 1985 for breaking and entering, home invasion and intent to commit larceny.

On June 14 Johnson was a no-show for a pretrial exam on another case in 34th District Court Judge David Parrott's courtroom.

The *Independent* later learned that Johnson was incarcerated on a federal charge of a felon knowingly and unlawfully in possession of a firearm, in this case a Colt .45 pistol with a laser sight which had previously traveled in interstate and foreign commerce.

At the time of his arrest he was in the company of two other felons: Shelon Willie-Earl Brummette (a/k/a Famo) and Javon Franklin Ellis, both of whom are listed as defendants in the case.

The home invasions in the northwest corner



Thomas Johnson

of Van Buren Township from November to April brought a lot of public comment that was put to rest with Johnson's arrest.

VBT Police were led to Johnson by placing a Trail Camera, usually used to track big game, in the back yard of a Denton residence that had been broken into in the past and was expected to be next on the list of break ins. On March 10, the camera caught Johnson apparently looking into the back living room window of the residence after dark.

The neighbors didn't recognize the man, but a known confidential informant gave information on Johnson.

Court records say police allege Johnson sold the Colt 45 with laser sight, which was stolen Jan. 27, to Willie-Earl Brummette for \$200 and Brummette sold it to Javon Ellis for \$250.

Ellis was arrested by Eastern Michigan University Police on charges of possession of marijuana and possession of the Colt 45 handgun with laser sight, stolen from VBT.

BYC makes offer to buy Moose Lodge for its Belleville clubhouse

Robert Coutts, administrator of the Belleville Moose Lodge, confirmed that the BYC has made "a rather generous offer" to buy the Moose property.

He said by the end of December or early January he will have a final announcement on the subject.

"We don't want to count our chickens before they're hatched," Coutts said, adding things can go wrong in real estate dealings.

The BYC is a private, social group that had purchased a lot at 430 N. Liberty Street on the lake in the City of Belleville and had planned to build its clubhouse there.

At its Sept. 13 meeting, the Belleville Planning Commission approved the BYC's plan to build a two-level private clubhouse with 7,300 square feet. That was almost double the size of the 4,300 square foot clubhouse approved by the city planning commission on Nov. 10, 2011. No construction has begun there.

The Moose Lodge is at 831 E. Huron River Drive in Van Buren Township, also on Belleville Lake. The assessed value of the property for 2012 is \$515,900. The parcel has 3.98 acres.

Dispatch logs not available for Van Buren Township, Belleville

8:58 a.m., Monday, Dec. 3

"The program used to procure the event log information is currently down. When it comes back up, I will get these to you as soon as possible. My apologies for any problems this may cause."

Ken Dandy

Information Technology

Van Buren Township Public Safety Dept.

Sumpter Township Police Dispatch Log

Sunday, Nov. 25:

- 0349 – fire dept. assist, Colorado
- 0926 – follow-up investigation, 23000 bl. Sumpter
- 0953 – fire dept. assist, Redwood
- 1407 – suspicious incident, 23000 bl. Sherwood
- 1451 – fire dept. assist, New Mexico
- 1455 – mental health commitment, Greenmeadow
- 1531 – assist other agency, 45000 bl. Bemis Rd.
- 1551 – ORV complaint, 46000 bl. Willow Rd.
- 1744 – citizen assist, 19000 bl. Martinsville Rd.
- 1816 – trespassing, 49000 bl. Wear Rd.
- 1925 – civil dispute, Rustic Lane
- 2038 – fire dept. assist, 24000 bl. Elwell Rd.

Monday, Nov. 26:

- 0125 – suspicious incident, 46000 bl. Willis Rd.
- 0943 – fire dept. assist, Nevada
- 1119 – alarm, 23000 bl. Elwell Rd.
- 1138 – ordinance violation, 46000 bl. Willis Rd.
- 1237 – fire dept. assist, 44000 bl. Willis Rd.
- 1452 – found property, 8200 bl. Rawsonville Rd.
- 2255 – assist other agency, Dakota

Tuesday, Nov. 27:

- 0436 – property damage accident, Rawsonville / Judd
- 0448 – property damage accident, Rawsonville / Judd
- 1006 – citizen assist, 23000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
- 1539 – animal complaint, 22000 bl. Bohn Rd.
- 1555 – fire dept. assist, 42000 bl. Willis Rd.
- 1906 – alarm, 8200 bl. Rawsonville Rd.
- 2021 – traffic hazard, Willis/Sumpter
- 2223 – suspicious vehicle, 5400 bl. Oakville Waltz

Wednesday, Nov. 28:

- 0853 – larceny, 19000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
- 1025 – fire dept. assist, 45000 bl. Judd Rd.
- 1030 – fire dept. assist, 49000 bl. Willis Rd.
- 1257 – follow-up investigation, 23000 bl. Sumpter
- 1542 – neighbor dispute, 45000 bl. Bontekoe
- 1631 – animal complaint, 23000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
- 1646 – suspicious incident, 26000 bl. Elwell Rd.
- 1648 – fraud, 42000 bl. Harris Rd.

Thursday, Nov. 29:

- 0052 – property damage accident, Willow / Sherwood
- 0624 – property damage accident, Oakville Waltz / Sumpter
- 1130 – dumping complaint, 26000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
- 1140 – well-being check, Rustic Lane
- 1233 – animal complaint, 23000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
- 1345 – fire dept. assist, 45000 bl. Dunn Rd.
- 1631 – property damage accident, Sumpter/Paris
- 1634 – well-being check, 46000 bl. Traskos
- 1954 – fire dept. assist, Dakota
- 2325 – suspicious incident, 17000 bl. Sumpter Rd.

Friday, Nov. 30:

- 0700 – alarm, 23000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
- 0823 – property damage accident, 23000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
- 1147 – child abuse/neglect complaint, 45000 bl. Bemis Rd.
- 1207 – reckless driver complaint, Sumpter/Willow
- 1302 – fire dept. assist, 40000 bl. Willis Rd.
- 1408 – citizen assist, 23000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
- 1435 – citizen assist, 23000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
- 1519 – suspicious person, 48000 bl. Willis Rd.
- 1541 – follow-up investigation, 42000 bl. Arkona
- 1641 – civil dispute, Rustic Lane
- 1820 – dumping complaint, 8700 bl. Rawsonville
- 1957 – suspicious incident, 40000 bl. Willow Rd.
- 2053 – fire dept. assist, Birch
- 2156 – juvenile complaint, 19000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
- 2245 – property damage accident, Delaware

Saturday, Dec. 1:

- 0027 – subpoena service, Carriage Ln.
 - 1016 – civil dispute, 17000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
 - 1503 – suspicious incident, 46000 bl. Willow Rd.
 - 1706 – follow-up investigation, 24000 Bohn Rd.
 - 1718 – animal complaint, 47000 bl. Judd Rd.
 - 2147 – civil dispute, 17000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
 - 2300 – follow-up investigation, 24000 bl. Bohn
 - 2313 – fire dept. assistance, Birch
 - 2337 – suspicious person, 46000 bl. Willis Rd.
 - 2347 – weapons violation, Birch
 - 2348 – malicious destruction of property, 6700 bl. Oakville Waltz Rd.
- Also on this week's log are 39 miscellaneous details, 139 patrol checks, and 74 traffic stops.

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Ask Angela

By Angela Nettrö

I am here to answer questions pertaining to buying or selling real estate. Send your questions to "Ask Angela", c/o *Belleville-Area Independent*, 152 Main Street, Ste. 9, Belleville 48111 or send me an email at nettroandco@comcast.net. I'll answer questions in this column.

Question from Paul in Romulus:

I am currently looking for an affordable home to buy. Money is tight, so I want to know is it really beneficial to spend extra money for a private contractor's inspection



**The Belleville
Independent is now a
drop off location for the
U.S. Marine Corps Toys
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Building (the old movie theater
building) across from Mr. Goofy's
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Buyer Tip: Try not to set more than 3-4 homes to see at one showing time. Looking at several homes can become quite confusing and make it harder to remember the features of the individual homes. Seeing too many homes at once becomes a rushed tour instead of thorough, personal viewings.

-- Angela

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